

## **SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS:**

Please replace the paragraph that begins on the bottom of application page 19 and ends on page 20 (paragraph 0040 as indicated in published application 20020172621) with the following replacement paragraph which is marked to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version:

In a further embodiment, one or more apertures may further comprise a septum, inserted therein, which may further contribute to a closed environment (thus, the device according to the present invention may further comprise a plurality of septums). The septum may comprise a slitted septum (slitted to facilitate tip insertion), a plug to seal off the end of the aperture into which it is inserted (e.g., to further prevent microbial contamination), or a septum which has one or more vent holes. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 10 each filling port 40 may further comprise a septum 45 which may further contribute to a closed environment. A septum generally comprises an elastomeric material which is inserted into an aperture. In the case of a septum for use with a filling port, it is preferable that the septum can provide a closure which is puncturable (e.g., by a pipette tip), and which is capable of resealing in a leak-proof manner even after multiple punctures. Thus, for example, with reference to FIG. 10, filling port 40 may further comprise septum 45 which is inserted and extends into filling port 40. Septum 45 should permit the introduction of pipette tip 47 through septum 45 and into filling port 40, seal tightly around tip 47 to prevent leakage through septum 45 while tip 47 is present in septum 45, allow withdrawal of tip 47 without unduly restricting the passage of tip 47 through septum 45, and allow for resealing of septum 45 in maintaining a closed environment. Also illustrated in FIG. 10 ~~is use of a septum 45~~ is use of a septum 45a to plug venting aperture 30 (e.g., after the components have been added to the filling port, and after the microchamber has been vented). As an example, plugging the venting aperture may be preferable such as when a fluid has already been introduced into the microchamber and an assay is performed over an extended period of time (e.g., ranging from several hours to days).

**DRAWING AMENDMENTS:**

Please replace Figure 10 as required by the Examiner with the attached replacement sheet.  
Also included is a version marked in red showing the correction made.